

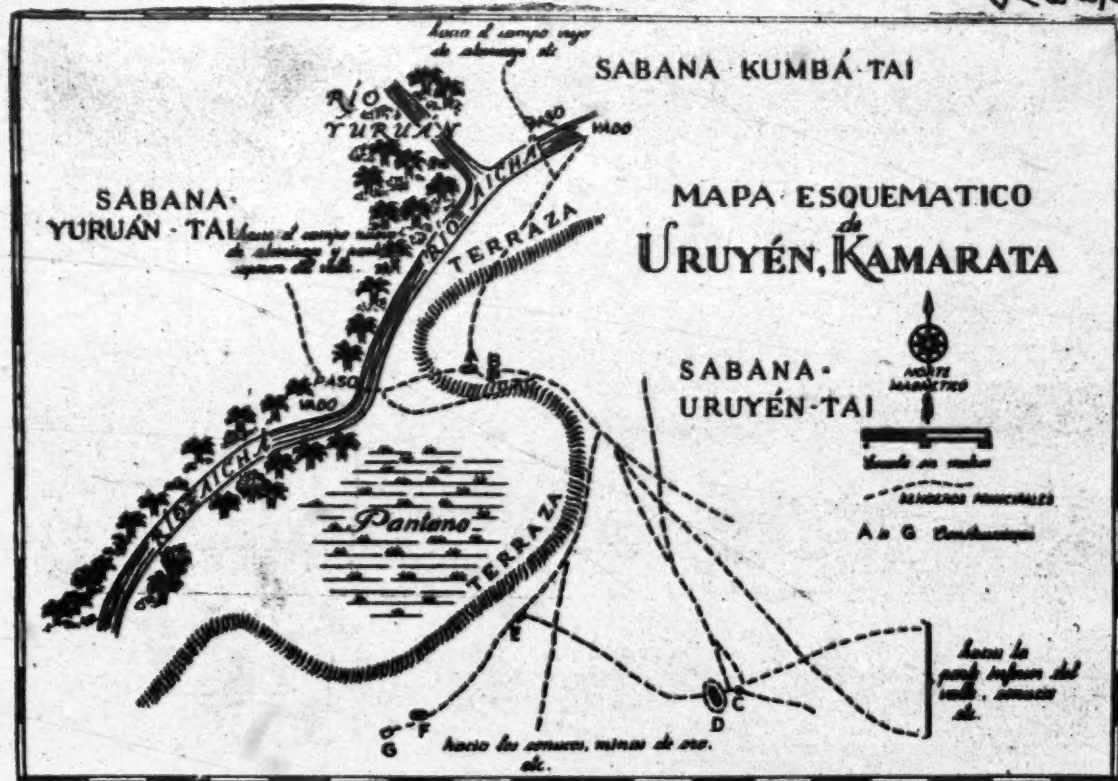


Fig. 11 - Kamarakoto Settlement.
Sketch map of Uruyén. A - G, buildings, see descriptions in text.

⁴⁸⁴₅₀₁ distances along or parallel to navigable streams rather than using canoes although these were available. All the inhabited places, as well as those frequented for any other purpose, are linked by well defined trails which are as permanent and as well known to the natives as our highways are to us. There are also long trails, their "through highways" or "interstate thoroughfares," that connect with the regions of other tribal groups, for instance to the Gran Sabana and to the Maquiritares country.

[48] In the sabanas these trails are self-made and are marked by absence of vegetation along the narrow track, which has a bare and usually hard and perfectly smooth bottom and soon becomes sunk a few centimeters below the level of the surrounding soil. They are very narrow. Even a main trail may be only fifteen or twenty centimeters wide, because the Indians always walk in single file and place one foot exactly in front of the other, so that the width of the trail is little more than the width of the foot. So ingrained is this habit that even when walking only a few meters two Indians never walk side by side. On the march they frequently carry on animated conversations with each other without turning their heads or appearing to address each other, a habit carried over to some extent into other circumstances so that it is rather uncommon for them deliberately to face each other for conversational purposes — a habit striking and sometimes disconcerting to the civilized visitor.

⁴⁸⁷ Trails through forest are equally visible although commonly floored with [412] leaves and twigs, which are not purposely removed. Interfering brush and branches are lopped off with machetes, leaving a passage where it is always possible to walk upright.

⁴⁸⁴₄₉₁ Swamps that cannot easily be avoided are crossed with the aid of bridges (Figs. 69, 70) or commonly on a chain of large moriche palm (*kwai-y?*) ⁴⁹⁹_[824] trunks. These trees are abundant in swampy situations and commonly a complete causeway can be made simply by felling them in the desired direction, so that the head of one falls near the stump of the next. The heavy trunks are not transported for this purpose. Gaps are filled in with smaller, readily carried logs and sticks or with the heavy bases of moriche leaves and the latter may be used alone for traversing short stretches of boggy ground without open water.

Streams may simply be forded if the bottom is hard and (as is true of all the streams of the central area) there are no dangerous fishes or reptiles, but even under these circumstances much traveled trails usually have bridges over small streams, up to five meters or so in width, and these are almost always provided if the bottom is of deep mud. The simplest and commonest bridge is simply a tree trunk, or frequently two laid parallel. Sometimes a small pole is lashed at the ends to standing trees on the two banks, or put in crotches of these, to serve as a handrail. Nordenskiöld (1930, Appendix 4) has given some interesting comments on South American Indian bridges and a distribution map, in connection with which it is notable that I observed no liana bridges and no

484 use of handrails at fords (without a log bridge). Having canoes, the Kamarakotos do not require long bridges and they belong to the northeastern pole-
 491 bridge area of Nordenskiöld's map. Iiana bridges especially typifying north-
 171 western South America, where navigation is less commonly understood, while complex cantilever bridges are confined to the central Andes.

499 Occasionally more complex, well supported, but still typically pole bridges are built, like that shown in Fig. 70, with the foot poles, always two in such more elaborate structures, laid on transverse supports which are fixed in place by piles. This particular bridge illustrates all three methods of support on piles. At one end the transverse element is simply wedged between plain piles and the rising bank. At the other end this piece is laid in notches in the tops of the piles. In the middle it is most firmly held, on steps in three piles, two on one side and one, in the middle, on the other, so that motion downward or in a horizontal plane is quite impossible. The elements are not lashed together, the foot poles being sufficiently secured by the bedding of the ends in the soft earth of the stream banks and at one end by a simple transverse piece that keeps them from sliding longitudinally into the bank. I did not see or hear of any lashed bridges, longer than a single pole, such as Koch-Grünberg reports for the Taurepānes (1923, Vol. III, Fig. 6).

501 Streams too large to bridge conveniently with poles or felled trees are
 484 forded or swum if need be, but preferably crossed by canoe. The use of the canoe for longitudinal carrying is not unknown, but its usual function in this
 ● [487] area is simply as a ferry. For instance, at Uruyén, where the main trail up and down the Kamarata valley crosses the Aichá, a canoe is kept as a ferry and seldom used for any other purpose, although the stream is fordable.

501 The Taurepānes and some other Arekunas use bark canoes, the so-called
 [489] woodskins (see Koch-Grünberg, 1923, Vol. III, Fig. 5; Roth, 1924, pp. 615-617). The Kamarakotos are well within the northern part of the distribution of woodskins (see Nordenskiöld 1924, Map 22) and they are aware of these vessels, but none appear now to be in use at least in the central group, where canoes are, in any case, rare and a luxury rather than a necessity. The few canoes now in use here are dugouts, simple but graceful in form, see Figs. 71, 72, of a single piece of wood except for the transverse braces or stretchers which also serve as seats. The ends are tapered and turn up, not closed by a separate piece of wood as in some Makuchi dugouts (Roth 1924, Plate 178A and B).

[192] Kamarakotos call embarkations in general kan.wa (or kaniwa, i.e. canoe) and this particular sort of dugout kuryara, showing the Carib root whence come the Spanish "curiara" and English "corial," but as their canoes are corials, the two words are essentially synonymous for them. They more often use the word
 [224] kuryara. The favorite wood is waldawan-yé, probably a species of Nectandra.
 [171] Roth notes that this (or a closely related) tree is also considered by the Arawaks to be best for dugouts.

[Text continues on p. 212]

685 adduced) to be sufficiently compensated by the forceable recovery of the stolen objects or of others of equal value, without any penalty. Within the central group theft must, however, necessarily be rare because it could hardly fall of
 681 instant detection. 170 The wholly non-Indian punishment of imprisonment is unknown, and the Indian punishments of whipping and of biting by ants were also said not to be in use here.

673 No actions other than physical injury, trespass (particularly on fishing waters), and theft were specifically cited as criminal and of conceivable occurrence. Voluntary cohabitation among the unmarried is not criminal, or even reprehensible, and rape and adultery are claimed to be unknown (a most
 609 unlikely statement, but no other information was obtainable). It should, how-
 684 ever, be recalled that at least one non-Indian traveler is rumored to have been executed for rape or seduction, but this was generally denied, as it probably
 674 would be, whether true or not. In such a culture and community most of the crimes on our statute books are nearly or quite impossible: fraud could hardly ever be successful, debts are seldom contracted and early payment could not be avoided if possible at all, and there are no taxes, licenses, or any of the other hundred and one fruitful causes of crimes and misdemeanors in more complex cultures.

858 It might be noted here also that in such cases as we saw the minor misde-
 861 meanors of children were not punished in any way and such punishment was said to be neither necessary nor customary.

Trade

433 The Kamarakotos do not have and, as far as one can judge from present conditions, have never had a completely self-contained economy. It is true that they could survive and even live comfortably on the products of their own region and their own labor, but it is also true that they do not and that the ne-
 177 cessity would mean a marked change in their way of life. Nor is this true simply
 439 because they now use some non-Indian materials and articles. They also re-
 440 quire various products to be obtained from other Indian tribes. It is certain that
 171 the Guiana tribes in general had well established trade routes and a far-flung
 system of inter-tribal trade long before white men appeared. This trade still flourishes.

437 All trade is by barter, in the truest sense. The parties normally exchange things that each wants for his own use at the moment, not accepting articles that serve as tokens for further exchange or that are to be kept for future use. The only advance beyond this basic type of barter is that intermediate barter is also practiced to some extent. An Indian will accept or even seek something that he himself does not want at the moment, but only if he knows that he can

170 [see footnote on p. 327, category 116 - Analyst]